

From: [Smith, Randy](#)
To: [Chandrasekaran, Aravind](#)
Cc: [Leite, Fabio](#); [Reed, Katie](#); [Smith, Randy](#); [Miriti, Maria](#); [Duffy, Lisa](#); [Hunt, Ryan](#); [Makhija, Anil](#)
Subject: Proposal to reimagine the Full-Time MBA Program
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 2:26:47 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

AC,

The proposal from the Fisher College of Business to reimagine the Full-Time MBA program was approved by the Council on Academic Affairs at its meeting on January 24, 2024. Thank you for attending the meeting to respond to questions/comments.

No additional level of internal review/approval is necessary. This action will be included in the Council's next [Annual Activities Report](#) to the University Senate (July 2024).

The Office of the University Registrar will work you with any implementation issues.

Please keep a copy of this message for your file on the proposal and I will do the same for the file in the Office of Academic Affairs.

If you have any questions please contact the Chair of the Council, Professor Fábio Leite(.11), or me.

I wish you success with this important program development.

Randy



W. Randy Smith, Ph.D.

Vice Provost for Academic Programs

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TO: Randy Smith, Vice Provost for Academic Programs

FROM: Graduate School Curriculum Services

DATE: **12/12/2023**

RE: Proposal to **Revise the Full Time MBA** in **Fisher College of Business**

The **Department of Business Administration** in the **Fisher College of Business** is proposing a **Reimagining of the Full-Time MBA (FTMBA)**.

The proposal was received by the Graduate School on **9/5/2023**. The combined GS/CAA subcommittee first reviewed the proposal on **11/30/2023** and requested revisions. Revisions were received on **12/8/2023**. Associate Dean Miriti reviewed and accepted the revisions on **12/11/2023**. The proposal is now forwarded to CAA for review.



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TO: Randy Smith, Vice Provost for Academic Programs
Maria Miriti, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

FROM: Aravind Chandrasekaran, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs & Executive Education, Fisher College of Business

DATE: December 7, 2023

RE: Response to the Comments on the Proposal to Re-Imagine the FT MBA program at Fisher College of Business

Dear Maria and Randy,

Thank you for the review of our Re-Imagining the FT MBA program at the Fisher College of Business. We have carefully reviewed the feedback from the Graduate School and Council on Academic Affairs (GS/CAA) curriculum subcommittee who are generally supportive of our proposal.

There are two comments offered by committee. We have offered our brief responses to the two comments and also included these changes in the updated proposal.

- **Comment 1: Please include a Transition plan. Will existing students be grandfathered in or will they have the opportunity to remain in their current plan and take new courses that are offered.**

Response: Thank you for bringing this important point. While the new curriculum will be rolled out in Fall 2024 for the class beginning that year, existing students from Fall 2023 will still be eligible to participate in the academies. That is, the second year students can choose to enroll into one of the four academies as a part of their elective offerings. This will allow the second years to gain valuable networking and experiential learning experience. As described in the proposal, we will continue to follow this model of having second years come back to the academies if they need to enhance their networking skills. We have clarified this [in page 12](#) of the proposal.

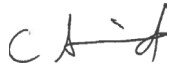
- **Comment 2: The program manager position is indicated as being a repurposed role as well as some other positions, but the detail is insufficient on the plan for future roles. What are the financial and labor implications of these repurposed (and any new) positions?**

Response: Thank you for this comment. The program manager position (i.e. Managing Director) is already in place for the current year (Fall 2023). This was done to increase engagement and improve student-learning outcomes in our program even before the Re-Imagining exercise. We repurposed an existing position on Senior Experiential Learning Project Manager into the new role of Managing Director (MD) to improve student learning. Similarly, even prior to the re-imagining proposal, the college had planned to have an experiential learning specialist reporting to the MD to manage the operational aspects of sourcing projects. There are no additional financial/labor implications with respect to the re-imagining MBA

program since these positions are already in place to help improve student outcomes. We have clarified this point in page 15 of the proposal.

Thank you again for your feedback on the program and we hope these responses address your concerns. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Chandrasekaran'.

Aravind Chandrasekaran, PhD

Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Executive Education
Fisher Distinguished Professor of Operations
Fisher College of Business
The Ohio State University

Re-Imagining the Full-Time MBA (FTMBA) Program: A Proposal to Improve Student Career and Learning Outcomes

Submitted by the Fisher College of Business, The Ohio State University

Introduction. The Fisher College of Business in alignment with its Champions of Change Strategic Plan (2021-2026) is proposing several programmatic changes to its Full-Time MBA (FTMBA) program (FTMBA) to improve student career and learning outcomes. The FTMBA program is a full-time in-person residential program that serves individuals who typically have 2-5 years of experience and who are either (1) **career switchers** and would like to hone up their managerial and interpersonal skills to prepare them for their next job, or (2) **career enhancers** and would like to strengthen their functional and interpersonal skills to accelerate in their management careers.

The current FTMBA program involves 60 total credit hours of coursework that in turn consists of 25.5 credit hours integrated core coursework, 7.5 credit hours of experiential coursework and 27 credit hours of electives. In 2018, the FTMBA program had gone over a significant redesign with the objective of improving the experiential and interpersonal skills for the students. However, several changes and recommendations from this redesign such as personalized coaching programs and mentoring opportunities were based on a 2-cohort design and did not take effect when the college strategically reduced the FTMBA intake to 1-cohort. While there were several important innovations such as Business Lab, Social Impact, Integrated Core etc., that were implemented from the redesign, there is a need to focus more on career related changes to address the current market needs. Figure 1 shows the US News Rankings for the Fisher College of Business FTMBA program. Figure 2 gives the recent weights used by the US News when evaluating MBA programs. A couple of important facts are evident from these rankings. First, Fisher's FTMBA program has steadily declined in its rankings moving from mid-20s overall (6th among publics) in 2010 to 44th overall (20th among publics) in 2024. Figure 2 that represents changes in weights in US News rankings suggests a significant shift towards career related outcomes in 2024. More than 50% of the US News ranking's weights are directly tied to the career related outcomes (i.e. starting salaries, employment at the time of graduation and 3-months after graduation). Figure 3 compares Fisher FTMBA student average starting salaries and bonuses with some of our peer and aspirational schools (Texas, Michigan, Indiana, Penn State and Minnesota). As seen from Figure 3, combined salaries for Fisher's students are lower than students

graduating from schools located in similar geographic regions (Midwest region in the US). Figures 4 and 5 give the percentage of students with full-time jobs from these schools, which also communicates a similar story on the improvement opportunities for Fisher. Overall, the decline in rankings can be directly related to Fisher’s performance in career related outcomes.

Figure 1: US News Rankings (2010-2024)

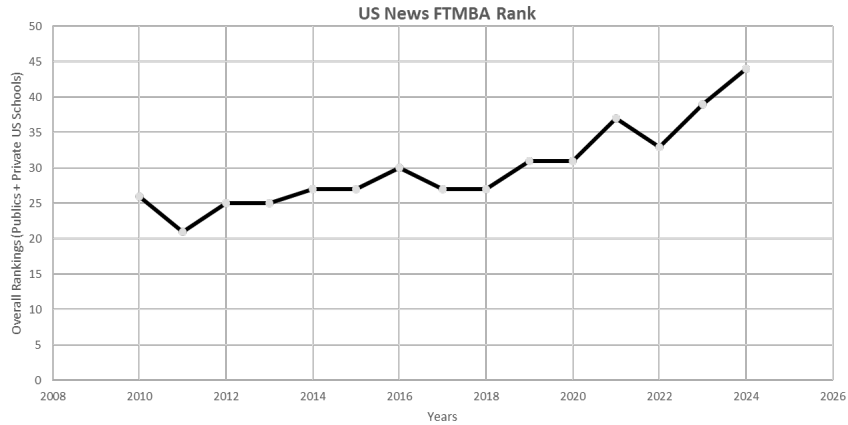


Figure 2: US News Weights for Rankings



Figure 3: Starting Salary Comparisons

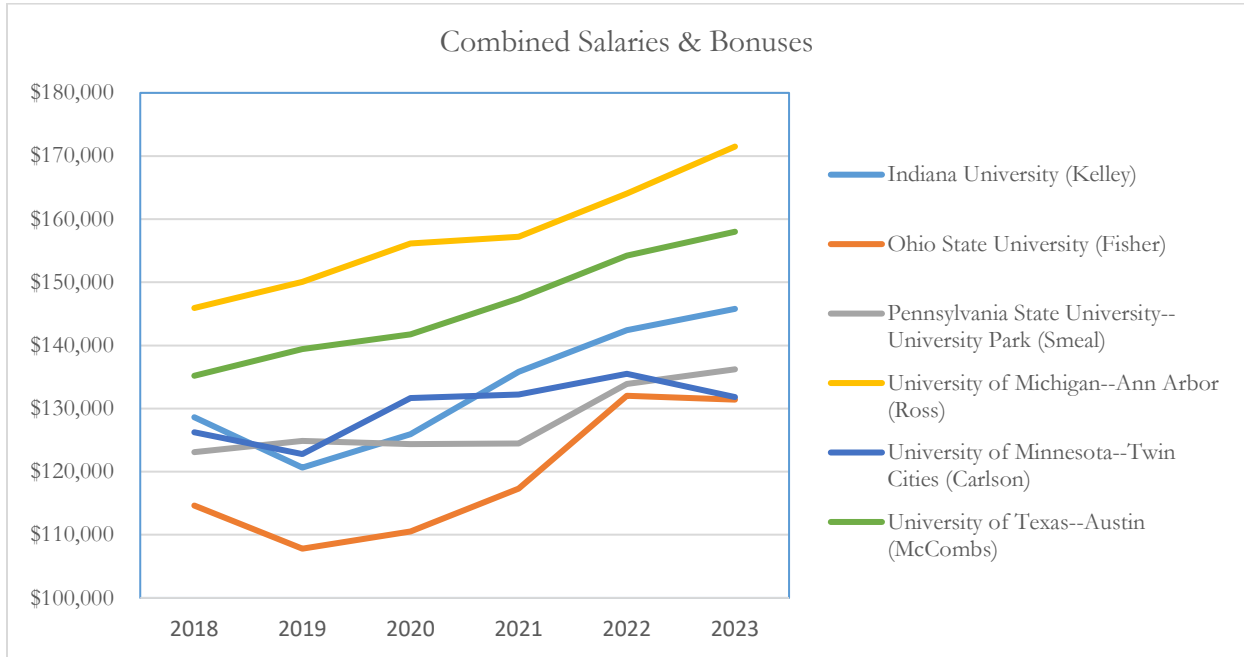


Figure 4: Percentage of Employed Graduates at Graduation

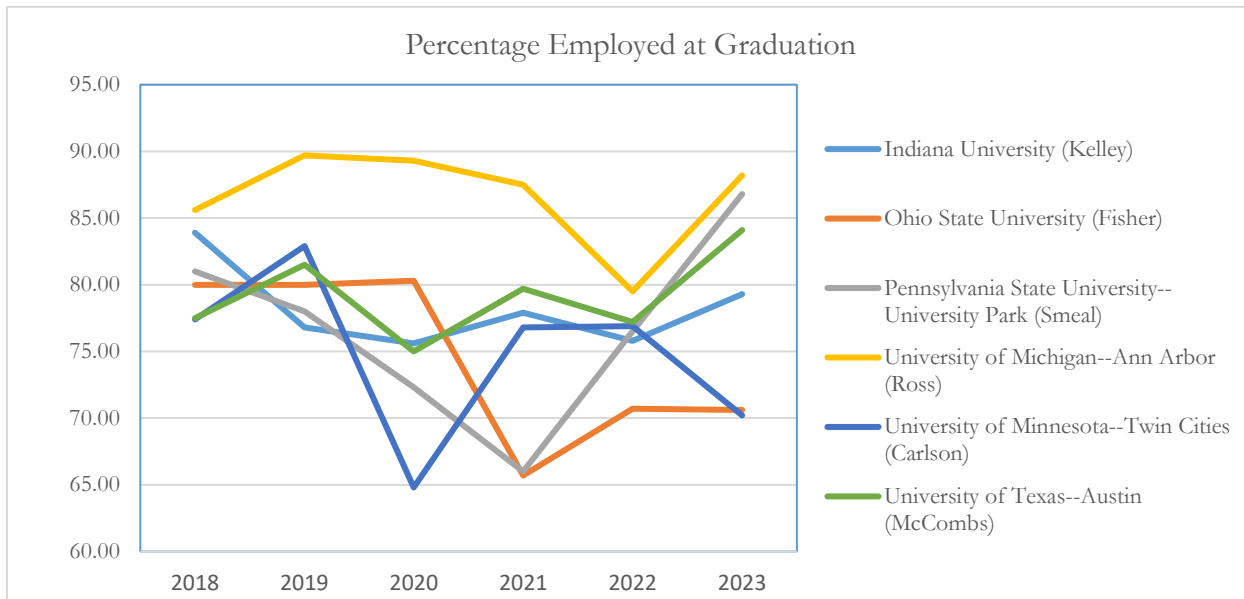
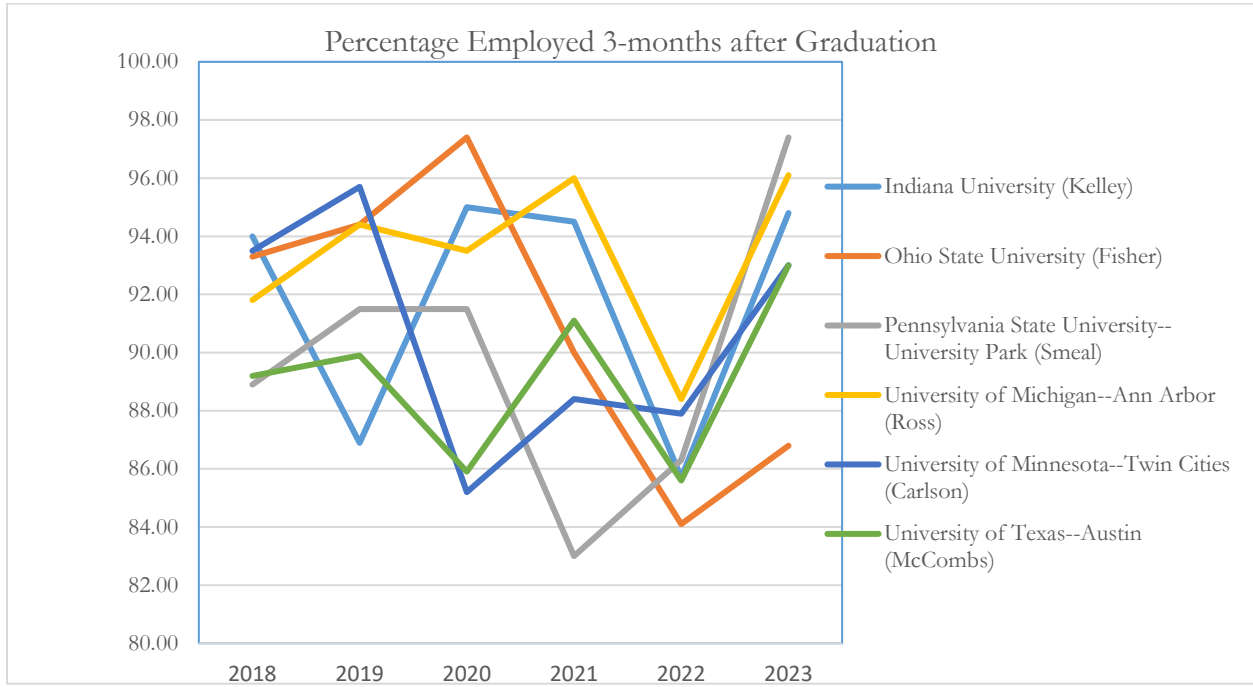


Figure 5: Percentage of Employed Graduates 3-months after Graduation



When studying Fisher’s rankings data from the last 8 years, we find that Fisher’s reputation and selectivity outcomes such as GPA, GMAT scores are on par or even slightly better than our peer and aspirational institutions (See Figures A1 and A2 in Appendix). Analyzing the career related outcomes data from peer (e.g. Minnesota, Penn State, and Indiana) and aspirational (e.g. Texas and Michigan) schools suggests that Fisher has tremendous opportunity to improve on these measures. Counterfactual analyses reveal that improving Fisher’s FTMBBA rankings to the mid- to – lower 30s in 2026 is possible if we are able to make improvements on these outcome measures as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Improvement Targets in Career Related Outcomes

	2024	2026 (Target)
Rank	44 th	Top 30s
Starting Salaries	107k	118k
Signing Bonuses	27k	37k
Outcome at time of graduation	77%	87%
Outcome 3 months of graduation	91%	98%

Re-Imagining Objectives and Process

While we acknowledge that rankings are lagging metrics and are often subjected to different viewpoints, we believe Fisher can re-imagine its FTMBA program that can allow our students to have successful outcomes immediately upon graduation. This is aligned with Fisher’s strategic plan calling for more “agility and proactivity of programs” (Strategic Priority #1 – Champions of Change Strategic Plan 2021-2026). As a result, under the directive from the Dean, a small subcommittee was convened to study more about the areas of improvement for the FTMBA Program and Re-Imagine its content to improve the overall rankings. Specifically, the following objectives were given to this subcommittee:

- 1. How can FTMBA program help accomplish student’s success outcomes in terms of career opportunities upon graduation?**
- 2. What are the changes that are needed to ensure FTMBA students can compete in the current markets with graduates from our peer and aspirational schools?**

A subcommittee comprising of the Associate Dean of Graduate Program and Executive Education, Program Directors from FTMBA, faculty representatives from all five academic departments and representatives from Graduate Programs Office and Office of Career Management was constituted in spring 2023 to carefully examine the FTMBA program for improvement opportunities. Before convening the working group, four different focus-groups were conducted to understand the current and future needs of the market. They included:

- 1- FTMBA Alumni Assessment and Reflection of the Program (March and April 2023)
- 2- Current Students Assessment and Feedback on the Program (March and April 2023)
- 3- Current Recruiters Assessment of the Program (March and April 2023)
- 4- Aspirational and Past Recruiters (who had recruited FTMBA students in the past) Assessments of the Program (April and May 2023)

All these focused group meetings lasted about 90 minutes each and we used semi-structured interview format (Appendix gives the questions) to obtain feedback on the program. They were also led by different members of the subcommittee. All these interviews were recorded and analyzed, and the content was made available to everyone in the subcommittee. In addition, we also collected data about our peer and aspirational programs as well as content regarding their current and future offerings.

The committee met five times in May after reading through the content from the focus group interviews and market research. These meetings were focused on refining the curricular, co-curricular, experiential, career related and admissions processes that can impact the outcomes identified in Table 1. There were four workshops in May focusing on the following objectives:

- Workshop 1 – Understanding the metrics and Reflection on Focus Groups
- Workshop 2 – Curriculum Refinement
- Workshop 3 – Experiential and Co-curricular Refinement
- Workshop 4 - Career and Professional Development

These workshops led to several idea generation based on the inputs from focused groups and other market research data. The following recommendations will be instituted in the FTMBA program in Fall 2024 based on these discussions. The overall credits and classes in the program remains unchanged. Instead, there will be several additions of new courses that can help prepare students for their successful outcomes and the shortening of some existing experiential learning courses. Table 2 gives the overview of the proposed changes to the curriculum and the rationale behind these changes are explained in detail below.

Table 2: Overview of the Changes Recommended for FTMBA Reimagination

Term	Proposed Change
Pre-Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-week Mandatory Pre-Term In-Person Orientation and Onboarding focused on preparation for the FTMBA program and career search.
Fall 1 st Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Management Tuesdays (CMT) First 7 weeks • New core class (1.5 credits) on professional development (Block A) • New elective (0.75 credits) on Career and Industry Immersion Academies (CIIA) • Shift Leadership (1.5 credits) class from Fall 1st term to Second Year Fall Term • A competency exam at the end of Fall term that demonstrates the students ability to understand and apply core curriculum skills
Spring 1 st term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Elective on Career and Industry Immersion Academies (0.75 Credit)
Fall 2 nd Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Core (1.5 credit class) • Remove Social Impact Class
Spring 2 nd term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Global Impact and Purpose Driven Leadership core class (1.5 credit class)

Figure 6 compares the current and proposed curriculum. The changes recommended in the proposed curriculum are intended to prepare our students for their careers. They are also focused on strengthening their interpersonal and communication skills which are very important differentiators.

Figure 6: Comparison of Current and Proposed FTMBA Curriculum

Current Full-Time MBA

YEAR ONE

AUTUMN SEMESTER - 4.5 WEEK BLOCKS

PRE-TERM CASE CHALLENGE	BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	CAPSTONE CASE COMPETITION
	ECONOMICS (3)			
	ACCOUNTING (3)			
		FINANCE (3)		
		OPERATIONS (3)		
	MARKETING		MARKETING (3)	
	ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR (1.5)		LEADERSHIP (1.5)	
	CORE INTEGRATIONS SESSIONS			

YEAR ONE

SPRING SEMESTER - 7 WEEK TERMS

TERM 1	TERM 2	SUMMER INTERNSHIP
BUSINESS LAB (3)		
STRATEGY (3)		
DATA ANALYSIS (3)		
GLOBAL BUSINESS (1.5)	ELECTIVE(S) SKILL DEVELOPMENT 1.5 TO 4.5 CREDIT HOURS (7.5 MAX)	

YEAR TWO

AUTUMN SEMESTER - 7 WEEK TERMS

TERM 1	TERM 2
SOCIAL IMPACT CHALLENGE (3)	
ELECTIVE(S) SKILL DEVELOPMENT 9 TO 12 CREDIT HOURS (15 MAX)	

YEAR TWO

SPRING SEMESTER - 7 WEEK TERMS

TERM 1	TERM 2
GLOBAL APPLIED PROJECTS - GAP* (3) <small>OPTIONAL ELECTIVE</small>	
ELECTIVE(S) <small>CAREER-FOCUSED SKILL DEVELOPMENT 11.5 TO 13.5 CREDIT HOURS (16.5 MAX)</small>	MAX PROBLEM SOLVING (1.5)

PROGRAM CREDITS BREAKDOWN

Integrated core coursework **25.5** credits
 Experiential coursework **7.5** credits
* Business Lab also counts as core coursework. The GAP elective adds 3 experiential credit hours via an elective.
 Personalized elective coursework* **27** credits
Total required (minimum) 60 credits

Reimagined Full-Time MBA

YEAR ONE

AUTUMN SEMESTER - 4.5 WEEK BLOCKS

BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	CAPSTONE CASE COMPETITION	COMPETENCY EXAM
ECONOMICS (3)				
ACCOUNTING (3)				
	FINANCE (3)			
	OPERATIONS (3)			
MARKETING		MARKETING (3)		
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (1.5)		ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR (1.5)		
CORE INTEGRATIONS SESSIONS				
		CAREER & INDUSTRY IMMERSION ACADEMIES (CIA) (.75)		

YEAR ONE

SPRING SEMESTER - 7 WEEK TERMS

TERM 1	TERM 2	SUMMER INTERNSHIP
BUSINESS LAB (3)		
STRATEGY (3)		
DATA ANALYSIS (3)		
GLOBAL BUSINESS (1.5)	ELECTIVE(S) CAREER-FOCUSED SKILL DEVELOPMENT 1.5 TO 4.5 CREDIT HOURS (6.75 MAX)	
CAREER & INDUSTRY IMMERSION ACADEMIES (CIA) (.75)		

YEAR TWO

AUTUMN SEMESTER - 7 WEEK TERMS

TERM 1	TERM 2
LEADERSHIP (1.5)	
ELECTIVE(S) CAREER-FOCUSED SKILL DEVELOPMENT 9 TO 12 CREDIT HOURS (16.5 MAX)	

YEAR TWO

SPRING SEMESTER - 7 WEEK TERMS

TERM 1	TERM 2
GLOBAL IMPACT AND PURPOSE DRIVEN LEADERSHIP (1.5)	
ELECTIVE(S) <small>CAREER-FOCUSED SKILL DEVELOPMENT 11.5 TO 13.5 CREDIT HOURS (15 MAX)</small>	MAX PROBLEM SOLVING (1.5)

PROGRAM CREDITS BREAKDOWN

Integrated core coursework **27** credits
 Experiential coursework **6** credits
 Personalized elective coursework* **27** credits
* Career and Industry Immersion count towards elective credit hours.
Total required (minimum) 60 credits

Explanation of the Changes Recommended for FTMBA Re-imagination.

Pre-Term Orientation and Onboarding: The committee recommends having an in-person mandatory 2-weeks of Pre-term for all the FTMBA students. The two-week duration is also consistent with the peer and aspirational school programs. In the current program, pre-term is not mandatory which results in variation in student participations. The Pre-term will consist of 2-weeks of planned activities that allow both domestic and international students to get accustomed to the first semester of the program. It will also allow students to get prepared for their internship interviews that can begin during the first four weeks of the fall semester. Topics such as internship preparation, presentation skills, problem-solving workshops, team building, and cross-cultural workshops will be the focus of the pre-term. There will also be several workshops led by the Office of Career Management on interviewing and job search strategy development. Finally, students will also get introduced to the concept of Career and Industry immersion that will allow them to focus on one of four areas of specialization during the program. These areas include Finance, Marketing, Operations & Supply Chain and Strategy & Consulting. There will also be separate workshops for the international students that will provide them information regarding employment authorization opportunities.

New Core Class on Professional Development (1.5 credits): The feedback from the recruiters and Alumni emphasized the need for improving the professional skills for our FTMBA graduates. In today's hypercompetitive environment, MBA graduates are required to master presentation and communication skills. They also need to excel in written communication and develop capabilities that allow them to be an effective listener. Having a core class that focuses on building professional development skills will prepare our students for the current and future market needs. While this course is currently offered as an elective in the spring term, the feedback from our recruiters, current students and alumni emphasized the need for the class early in their program. Many other aspirational MBA programs have professional development as a part of their integrated core. Our recommendation is to have this class earlier in the fall semester to better prepare our students for internship opportunities. This class will now replace the core leadership class which will be moved to the second-year curriculum.

New Elective on Career and Industry Immersion Academies (0.75 credits in Fall and 0.75 credits Spring of First year): A new elective on career and industry immersion Academies (CIIA) will feature in the Re-Imagined FTMBA curriculum. Students will have an option to choose one immersion area among the four focus areas offered by the Fisher College. These areas include: (1)

Finance, (2) Marketing, (3) Operations & Supply Chain and (4) Strategy and Management Consulting. These areas have been identified based on the reputation of the FTMBA program, job opportunities over the past 10-years for our FTMBA students as well as the growth areas within and outside Columbus regions. Each of these focus areas will in turn consist of few other specialization topics as outlined in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Focus Areas within Career and Industry Immersion Academies

Career and Industry Immersion Academies (CIIA)



The CIIA elective will be offered both in the Fall and Spring Semester and will have different objectives. During the fall semester, CIIA (0.75 credits) will introduce our students to the career pathways to get them ready for their internship opportunities. This elective will feature on Fridays in the second half of the fall semester and will focus on the following objectives:

- Exposure to the Industry Career and Developing Skills
- Networking Events with Recruiters and Alumni
- Site Visits (during Fall break) to companies
- Industry speakers on Fridays
- Case Analyses to Understand Industry
- Day in the life – of the functional manager
- Career Trajectory

There will be four CIIA Directors for these topics who will work closely with the Office of Career Management team to coordinate the activities during the class. During the fall break, each track will plan on their site visits to both local companies and companies outside Ohio (e.g. Chicago, New York, Seattle). These trips will focus on introducing our FTMBA students to various career opportunities within their particular industries. The Managing Director (MD) for the FTMBA program will be instrumental in planning these trips in coordination with the individual instructors and the Graduate Programs Office. Fisher's Alumni office will also work closely with the program in engaging our alumni in this class.

In the spring, students will continue to remain in their CIIA (0.75 credits) on Fridays to strengthen their interpersonal skills and getting ready for their internships. Students will also have an option to switch between academies between Fall and Spring semester if they decide to refocus their career in a different industry area. This flexibility is a key feature of the re-imagined program and sets us apart from other aspirational programs that have similar models. The CIIA class during spring term will focus on the following objectives:

- Re-onboarding for students who want to switch between CIIA tracks
- Problem Solving in specific Functions.
- Preparing for internship
- Deep dives real world challenges
- Complex case solving
- Shadowing a C-suite in their day at work
- Preparing for 2nd year – functional strengthening (recommended elective coursework introductions)

Having CIAs in tandem with the existing core curriculum that is integrated will allow students to apply the foundational skills gained during their classes and learn from their applications on Fridays. The committee decided to include CIAs during the first year of the FT MBA program. The need for it drastically reduces in the second year given that over 40% of our students end up converting their internship into full-time offers. We will continue to offer these academies for our students who require additional exposure to the industry in their second years. In Fall 2024, these academies will also be available for the current students (who joined the program in Fall 2023) to help refine their skills for the full-time job markets.

Career-Related Workshops (Tied to CIAs). The committee also recommends stronger ties between the career-related workshops that are led by the OCM team with the CIAs. These workshops prepare our students for the internship interviews and are scheduled to occur during pre-term as well as on Tuesdays (i.e. Career Focused Tuesdays) during the first seven weeks of the program. A new curriculum will be developed and led by OCM team that will include the following objectives.

- Resume Building
- Career Exploration
- Industry Research/Exploration
- Interview Preparation
- Preparing for type of interviews (Zoom/In-person)
- Case Interview Preparation
- Evaluating Compensation Package
- Negotiating Job Offer
- Networking/ LinkedIn / Mentoring
- Comprehensive Job Search Process

While some of these topics are offered in the current FT MBA program, they are optional for students and as a result the participation rates are quite low. In the re-imagined FT MBA program, students will be required to attend these workshops and their performance will be tied to CIA electives.

Changes to the Curriculum in the Second Year of FTMBA Program

Leadership Core Class Offered after Internship (3rd Semester). The committee recommends moving the leadership core from the first year to the second year specifically during the first term of their third semester. This is based on a couple of important feedback. First, the course will better serve our students in their second year after the students come back from their internships to reflect on their performance and re-orient their leadership traits for their full-time jobs. Second, moving the leadership core class to the second year allows for the inclusion of the professional development core in the first year which has been consistently identified as an important skillset for FTMBA students. The content of the leadership core class will also be adjusted to capture this change in the program.

Reposition of the Social Impact Challenge Class. The committee also recommends replacing the social impact challenge (1.5 credit) class that occurs in the third semester with a global impact and purpose driven leadership class (1.5 credit) in the last semester of the FTMBA program. Recurring feedback from our current students and alumni suggested the heavy dose of project related coursework in the program (e.g. Business Lab, Electives with Projects, Max Problem Solving etc.). Hence the Global Applied Projects (currently an elective in Spring 2nd year) offers incremental value to our students, most of whom already have jobs. Rather, a new class titled Global Impact and Purpose Driven Leadership (1.5 credit in spring 2nd year) will introduce FTMBA students to the importance of global citizens and tackle future generation issues in underdeveloped economies around the world. This class also aligns with FTMBA mission to create “principled leaders who value people and planets ahead of company profits”. We believe this is an important differentiator for our FTMBA program that is focused on producing high quality leaders. Examples of Global Impact missions include reducing carbon footprint, improving health equity, and upskilling individuals on problem solving and leadership. While this class runs for 14 weeks of spring semester with variety of speakers and cases on all aspects of ESG, the students will spend their spring break in the second year plus an additional instructional week in an immersive service learning trip abroad tackling socio-economic challenges in an underserved/ underdeveloped region in the world (e.g. Villages in Africa and India etc.). Fisher has partners in these regions (e.g. SPJIMR – a premiere B-school in India, Gateway offices in Brazil) who will help source these challenge opportunities. Preliminary conversations with the advancement suggest possibility of donor funds to manage travel during these impact driven missions. Overall, this course will be a transformational experience for our students who are graduating with excellent

foundational and interpersonal skills and are also given an important experience of the realities of environments and social challenges that will affect them as future leaders.

Overall, the re-imagined FTMBA Program will enable Fisher to offer a focused FTMBA program that allows our students to better prepare for their careers and enable them to secure full-time positions at the time of graduation. The changes made to our program in terms of Career and Industry Immersion Academies will help focus on student's learning over the course of the degree. Finally,

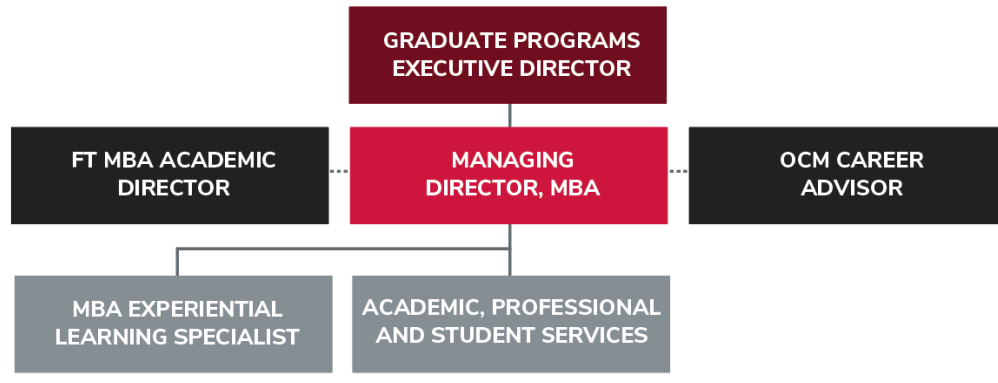
Structural Changes to the FTMBA Program

Though not a part of the re-imagining exercise, the committee also recognizes the importance of making several organizational changes to support student learning and development. The following changes that are made in FTMBA program to align with the re-imagination of the program.

- **Managing Director for FTMBA Program.** The FCOB leadership repurposed an existing job on managing experiential projects to now include the overall management of the FTMBA program. This is a full-time staff position that focuses on improving the student experience and learning as well as working with Advancement and Alumni offices to strengthen our engagement with the alumni. Several other peer and aspirational programs (Michigan, Indiana, Penn State) have similar roles to improve student learning. We find the need for a full-time MD especially after the COVID-19 pandemic to build a community among the MBA students. The MD will be working closely with the Academic Director of the FTMBA program to ensure that program meets both the academic and career related goals.
- **Restructuring OCM to create Focus among FTMBA students.** The Office of Career Management also restructured its operations to dedicate one full-time career advisor who will work closely with the MD and the Academic Director to meet with students and help them advance on their career related goals. This change to a single point of contact will help with continuity in career advising. Other career advisors will be working through this FT-MBA career advisor as and when needed to ensure adequate student experience.
- **Restructuring Academic Advising to Include Student Services.** With the inclusion of new career focused learning opportunities through Career and Industry Immersion Tracks, there is a need for more support structure to help with student learning. The FCOB leadership will repurpose two existing open positions to help the MD and the relevant faculty to execute

these classes and improve student engagement and learning. These student service and academic advisors will report to the MD and work closely with the Academic Director to improve student engagement and learning. The new FT MBA program structure is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Support Structure for the Re-Imagined FTMBA Program



It is important to note that these organizational structure changes **are done by repurposing existing** roles and open positions and does not require any new investments from the college. In fact, these positions are already in place for our current students. The Managing Director joined the Fisher College of Business in Fall 2023 and the current cohort of students are have shared positive feedback on having a dedicated individual navigate through various aspects of the program. The MBA experiential learning specialist, OCM advisor and academic professional and student service specialist are already existing resources for the program.

Changes to Admissions and Recruiting

Appendix A1 and A2 suggest that our incoming student profiles in terms of GPA and GMAT scores are very similar to peer and aspirational schools. In terms of combined work experience (Appendix A3), there has been a decline in the number of months of work experience for our incoming students over the last two years when compared to the other schools. The committee recommends improving the combined work experience numbers to 65-70 months in the next admission cycle. The changes made through CIIA and focus towards the four industry areas will help us attract talented students to our FTMBA program.

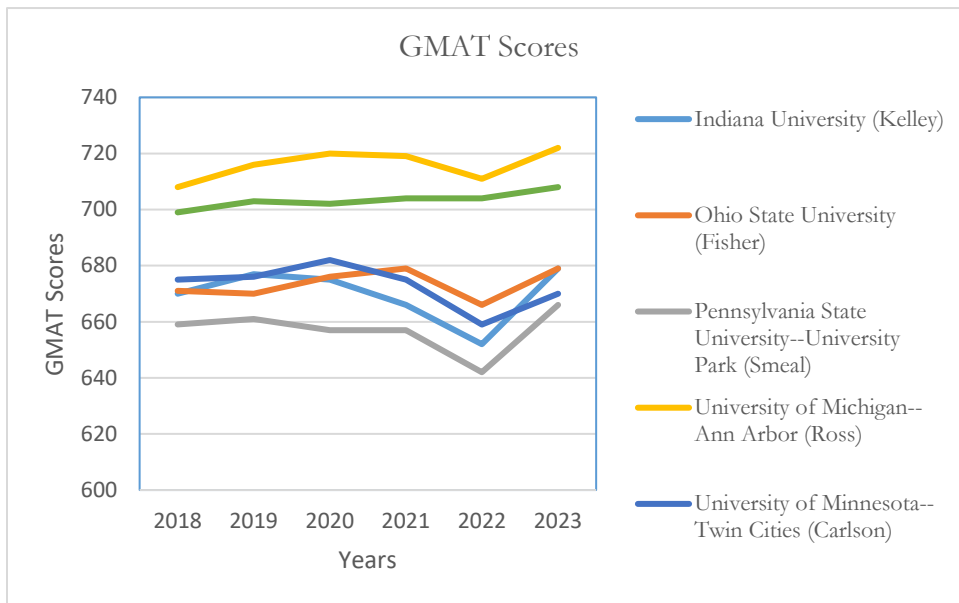
Implementation Plan

The committee recommends that the Re-imagined FTMBA take full effect for the incoming class of Fall 2024. The program will **remain as a one-cohort program** with the same amount of scholarship budget. The class sizes will remain at 45-50 students. The new additions of career-related learning outcomes and the focus on four different career domains will attract talented students into our FTMBA program. We will revisit the metrics outlined in Table 1 in 2026 and 2027 to ensure that these changes are translating into student success. The program will also develop several leading indicators that can be used to assess progress among these dimensions. We also recommend examining the outcomes from these changes in 2027 and making the necessary adjustments to refine our FTMBA program.

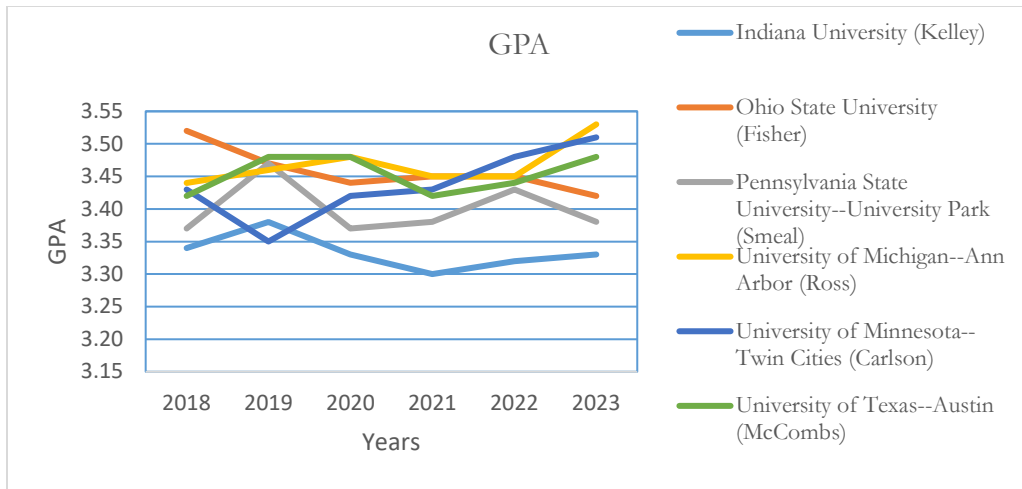
Conclusion

The Re-Imagined FTMBA program will allow Fisher and the Ohio State to move up the rankings and reputation. More importantly, it will enable our FTMBA students to seek better career outcomes upon graduation and prepare them for the future market needs.

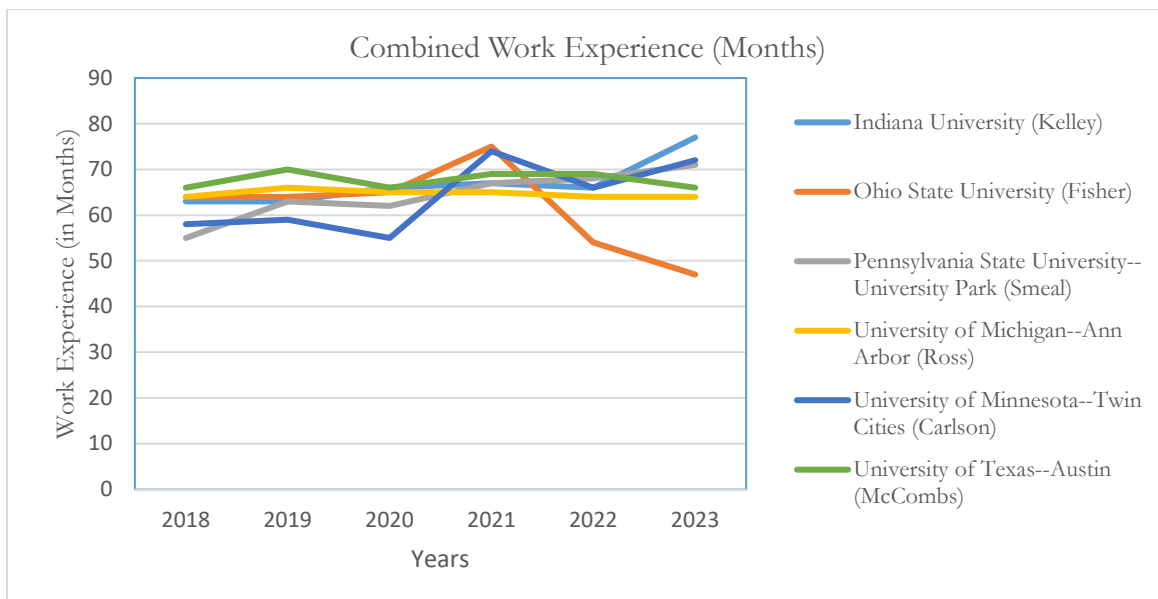
Appendix A1 – Comparison of GMAT Scores for Incoming Students across Peer and Aspirational Schools



Appendix A2 – Comparison of GPA for Incoming Students across Peer and Aspirational Schools



Appendix A3 – Comparison of Combined Work Experience (in months) for Incoming Students across Peer and Aspirational Schools



Appendix A4 REIMAGINE FISHER FTMBA EMPLOYER FOCUS GROUPS 2023

Company Representation:

Amazon, Procter & Gamble, Home Depot, Wendy's International, FTI Consulting, Deloitte Consulting, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co, IBM, Intel, RG Barry, ABB, McKinsey, Nationwide, Capital One, Intel, Nestle, CoBank, Curia, Vertiv, Defense Logistics Agency, Google

Soft Skills dominated both conversations in terms of what employers are looking for along with valuing 3-5 years of work experience prior to the MBA. **Select data-focused and technical skills** also surfaced – main themes and qualitative data follows:

THEMES

What Employers are Looking for/Soft Skill THEMES:

- Professional polish, presentation skills, executive presence
- Concise communication
- Accountability, Adaptability, Humility
- Creative problem solver; critical thinking
- Team oriented/works well with others, collaborative
- Exudes Confidence; comfortable making decisions
- Genuine interest in and valuing DEI and sustainability (be able to provide personal examples)
- Persuasion, influence, and negotiations-skills
- Curious, interested in learning, growth mindset, ability to learn on-the-fly
- Ability to work cross-functionally
- Ability to work with uncertainty and ambiguity
- Ability to use data to make decisions
- Ability to manage projects and meet deadlines
- Leadership skills
- Initiative, proactive, resourceful
- Strong work ethic
- Honed, refined interviewing and storytelling skills; being able to articulate their value

What Employers are Looking for/Data/Technology THEMES:

- Excel and advanced Excel skills
- Advanced data analytics (Power BI, Workfront process automation software, ChatGPT, Sequel, VLOOKUP, Tableau, AI/ML basic knowledge, Python)

Prior Work Experience:

- 3-5 years of work experience strongly preferred (prior to MBA)

International Students:

- Three employers (out of 21) said they were able to hire international candidates
- MBA PROGRAM/SELECT ASPECTS OF IMPORTANCE:
- Immersion programs to help students build negotiation and cross-functional teaming skills, and ability to manage projects and meet deadlines
 - Students should demonstrate their ability to be culturally/diversity sensitive
 - Having a major or specialization is not as important as getting all the foundational coursework in each business discipline and knowing how to work cross-functionally

REIMAGINE FISHER FT MBA EMPLOYER FOCUS GROUP #1

March 30, 2023

Attendees: Patti Cudney, Angel Fernandez, Kathy Koutras, Praveen Kumar, Paul Sobecki, Muzzami Fadalla, Edwin Jones, Saleel Muzumdar, Lindsey Lorenz, Sailor Seguire-Hall, Anna Foli, Oliver Coulter, Elsie Jamin-Maguire, Brad Stuetzer, Tom Poole, Jamie Mathews-Mead, Mandy Williams, Allison Jones, Nancy Gilbertsen, Paul North, Aravind Chandrasekaran

Companies Represented: Amazon, Procter & Gamble, Home Depot, Wendy's International, FTI Consulting, Deloitte Consulting, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co, IBM, Intel

When hiring/recruiting MBAs, what do you currently look for in terms of skills, characteristics?

Do you anticipate this changing in the future – why/why not?

- Procter & Gamble: Saleel – good combination of analytical and communication strengths and a culture fit for P&G. Leadership, influence – examples of innovation (creative solutions), productivity (efficiencies), and people who can work well with others, work in multi-functional teams.
- Home Depot: Muzzamil – for management and leadership positions we push them to be able to take a stand and be able to justify what they are saying, need critical thinking skills - creating a foundation of confidence so you can show you can get people to follow you and be strong enough to deal with the fallout of any of your decisions.
- Wendy's: Lindsey – take their experiences and be able to translate them to the job you are interviewing for. Need to be able to have students speak (communication skills) to their own specific accomplishments (rather than just the team). They have to be curious and excited about the job and the company/industry.
- FTI Consulting: Anna – for consulting – fungibility. Ability to navigate between a variety of transactions – be able to collaborate and transfer skills across projects.
- Amazon: Patti — problem solvers, okay with ambiguity and uncertainty, ability to use data to make decisions
- Deloitte Consulting: Sailor – can you carry yourself in challenging situations with people who are high level in the firm – can they converse with clients who may be challenging, interpersonally savvy/client facing, airport test
- Deloitte Consulting: Paul - executive presence. Speaking with confidence. Likeability. Professionalism – can be in the room with a client. Prepared for case interviews. Testing

aptitude for quantitative skills and out of the box reasoning. Teaming/executive presence. Deloitte is shifting more to a tech lens – do they know about technologies

Future state?

- Home Depot: Muzzamil – for marketing – we are becoming more data driven and operations focused – could students be knowledgeable of agile processes, meeting deadlines, digest and turn around a lot of information quickly. Students need to be able to demonstrate their ability to manage projects and meet deadlines.
- Goodyear: Brad – at Goodyear they are just starting to get into AI technologies in the future.
- Procter & Gamble: Saleel – more advanced data analytic abilities, Power BI – Workfront – process automation software, ChatGPT – MBA's need to have a base understanding of all these things.
- Home Depot: Muzzamil – they are pretty data focused and the older folks don't have this, MBA's need to know how to integrate all the new technologies.

What stands out to you about Fisher MBAs?

- Home Depot: Muzzamil – presentation skills and polish are both key; There are opportunities around autonomy – need to be able to speak to your own accomplishments - need to have their own story.
- Procter & Gamble: Saleel – most valuable is the team-based approach – ability to work with and influence others and is coming through with recent applicants – what is missing is leadership – students who have had leadership experience to pull from. Not getting it from the program or don't have enough coming in. For P&G MBA's come in 1 rung above. Those who come right from undergrad do not meet their expectations and have not been successful. They have to have prior work experience – if they don't, they bring them in at the lower level.
- Deloitte Consulting: Sailor – shifted to requiring 3 years of work experience in order to be able to recruit with Deloitte – they will not even make it to the interview if they don't. They will not hire them in at a lower level.
- FTI Consulting: Anna – taking initiative and being proactive - you need to have the thoughts and frameworks, how you think and process the information, attitude and aptitude are more important than technical skills
- Inspire: Elsie – lack of ability to take initiative and think ahead of the customer or client and having the autonomy (not waiting for direction) students who dive in and can run with the projects.
- IBM: Edwin – have to be socially/culturally sensitive, diversity sensitive; he got a lot from Fisher in this and can we add even more of this to the Fisher program.

Soft skills important – why or why not?

- IBM: Edwin: The importance of these skills will continue to increase as we continue to use virtual platforms and students must be able to embrace the cultural sensitivity skills online as well.
They bring a work ethic with them – they take pride in where they go to school and are happy to be there and they show up and work hard.
- Amazon: Patti – basic communication skills are a challenge – communicate in writing, verbally and reading information and details they want to be sure they are providing good

communication throughout the whole recruiting process – from first time meeting the recruiter all the way through the hiring process. Lack of attention to detail and really taking in information.

What stands out to you about MBA candidates from other programs?

- Deloitte Consulting: Paul – students at Fisher lack immersion compared to others – the GAP program, outside the school opportunities do develop the soft skills and being able to do complex problem solving is still more important than the technology knowledge. The ability to work cross-functionally, have people skills etc. and the immersion programs help with this. Also - students being able to be successful in the hybrid or remote work environment – how do we set them up for success with seeking out networking, building relationships etc.... (Ex. Utopia, having to negotiate with each other, etc.)

Can you/do you hire international students? Why/why not?

- Amazon: Patti – they can consider F1 candidates at Amazon and will help students find legal work authorization.
- Deloitte Consulting: Sailor – for Deloitte they do not hire international.
- Procter & Gamble: Saleel – they do not because they cannot make a case that an entry level candidate cannot be found in the US.

When you are hiring, are majors/specializations important or do you prefer a candidate with a general business (or other) MBA degree? Does having a major/specialization matter?

(Moved into soft skills discussion)

- Amazon: Praveen – for majors at Amazon – there isn't really a clear preference. Leadership experience is what they look for the most – have you dealt with complexity and scale is what they look for the most. Being able to learn on the fly.
- Wendy's: Lindsey – a major is not as important as having a foundation in marketing – thinking about how they can get those foundational classes in before the internship. And can you relate your experiences to the work you will be doing at Wendy's.
- Procter & Gamble: Saleel – don't care about the major but the students have to take a minimum of finance and accounting classes and marketing classes, but the major isn't necessary.
- Deloitte: Sailor – same as Saleel.

Are technical/hard skills important to you? Why/why not? (what technical/hard skills are you typically seeking?)

- Amazon: Praveen: Simulation risk and data analytics were very helpful (using excel) – need to be able to find the errors in others work as well. Understanding how things work in the virtual world as well is important.

Are there any badges or certificates be helpful when you are recruiting students? – *the badges are not necessary* – could be nice to have but not must haves.

- OSU Wexner Medical Center: Kathy: Koutras – are appealing but *not required* – it is nice to have the MBA's have the extra experience – process improvement, lean six sigma.
- Procter & Gamble: Saleel – a nice to have but *not a requirement* – in Finance is just that they expect students to be able to use Excel and more advance Excel skills.
- Goodyear: Brad – it's nice to have but *not a must have*.

Are soft skills (smart skills/core skills – leadership, problem-solving, presentation skills, interpersonal communication, team orientation, etc.) important to you? Why/why not? (what soft/core skills are you typically seeking?)

(conversation naturally focused on soft skills earlier in the conversation)

If you were to give advice to a student who was starting an MBA program regarding what they should do to enhance their marketability, what advice would you give them and why?

- Deloitte Consulting: Sailor from the recruiting events perspective – as much as students can be present at the campus events – showing up, asking questions and taking time to network afterward is so important to set themselves apart.
- Amazon: Praveen - in the first phase – they need to open themselves up to the US experience – assimilate well, and then have to prioritize need to be able to deep dive into their stories can prepare their stories and have all the data points and truly tell the whole story – prepare stories and cases ahead of time. Prepping them before the sprint.
- Wendy's: Lindsey – find an MBA alum from OSU and reach out on day 1. Give them the advice to be proactive and get the networking going.
- FTI Consulting: Anna – and building the relationships with each other – 1st and 2nd years. Keeping in touch with people and being resourceful – taking the time to create strong bonds.

If you were to give advice to the FCOB regarding reimagining/enhancing/improving the Fisher MBA program, what advice would you give us and why?

What metrics play into the decisions they make?

Years of Work Experience before the MBA degree:

- AMAZON: Patti – require 3 -5 years of preMBA work experience (and prefer 5)
- PROCTER & GAMBLE: Saleel – require 3 years of experience min. We might look at test scores
- WENDY'S: Lindsey – require 3 + years

REIMAGINE FISHER FT MBA EMPLOYER FOCUS GROUP #2

April 5, 2023

Attendees: Timothy Renner, Nicole Furnia, Chris Scott - McKinsey, Matthew Nordman, Kush Pathak, Joe Lopez, Tom Weirich, AC, Deepak Kirpalani, Eric Vanderson, Betsy Schlembach, Natasha Porter, Alex Dorko, Jamie Mathews-Mead, Mandy Williams, Nancy Gilbertsen, Paul North, Aravind Chandrasekaran

Companies Represented: RG Barry, ABB, McKinsey, Nationwide, Capital One, Intel, Nestle, CoBank, Curia, Vertiv, Defense Logistics Agency, Google

When hiring/recruiting MBAs, what do you currently look for in terms of skills, characteristics?

Do you anticipate this changing in the future – why/why not?

- Vertiv: Betsy – relevant internship experience and they should be able to clearly articulate the way their education is relevant. Transferability of skills
- Capital One: Kush- problem solving skills and dealing with ambiguity
- Nicole – analytical skill set and using data to problem solve
- Google: Alex D. – Need to be able to write in Sequel or someone else gets the job – Python is nice to have
- Nestle: Tom W. – benefits if you have the data analysis skills – being able to get the data
- CoBank: Deepak – critical thinking, focus mostly on the soft skills – the way they respond to questions, can they fit to the team culture, ability to learn and adapt to a new industry, environment
- Nationwide: Matthew – someone who demonstrates ownership in success, and drive and thrive in ambiguity
- McKinsey: Chris – ability to structure communication, expect the skillset to be there – have to communicate in a concise way. Experience being successful working in diverse teams effectively, communication skills, ability to work in diverse teams, humility, coachability
- Defense Logistics Agency: Natasha - Critical thinking, strategic thinking, being comfortable making decisions
- Intel: Joe – just demonstrating success in things they have done, humility and adaptability/ability to learn – be a sponge and get along with others while adding value
- CoBank: Deepak -What may change in the future probably technical skills as AI involves.
- Intel: Joe – for future – in the past soft skills/management skills was all you needed – now and into the future- technical skills using data, Power Bi Tableau, Sequel – really important to have these today
- RG Barry: Tim – rockstar MBA’s – someone who has both the technical and soft skills. Also – someone who has been working to continue to get better and learn new skills.
- Capital One: Kush – some soft skills may change as well – giving clear feedback, setting clear goals, clear coaching to those who work for you
- Google: Alex – Sequel is just a baseline skill today – won’t hire you if don’t have this. VLook ups, etc... For the future – They need to have a perspective on DEI why it is important, etc.. Sustainability – they need to have a point of view on this not just want to get into it or simply care about it.

What stands out to you about Fisher MBAs?

- CoBank: Deepak – Fisher produces more well-rounded MBA’s the generalize perspective in their understanding of general business – can hold their own on all areas of business
- Nationwide: Matthew – the ethos at Fisher is really strong – people are collaborative and supportive and these are so important to our culture - really values this.
- McKinsey: Chris – high potentials – the students that make the process theirs and own it – they leverage the OSU network or have prepped so far before they talk with Chris – really tailored to McKinsey. Those who are doing things even outside of Fisher, (case competitions, GAP program, branching out against others across the country when they do things even outside of Fisher)

- ABB: Nicole – Fisher tends to have candidates with really diverse backgrounds, a lot of involvement and engagement and really strong communication throughout the recruiting process with them.
- Capital One: Kush – Operational Excellence program stands out

What stands out to you about MBA candidates from other programs?

- Nestle: Tom – the competition is internal candidates. HR is focusing more on upskilling and providing more training to current employees to bring them up than hiring from outside
- Vertiv: Betsy – candidates for the FLRP program. Not built for MBA's really. They are looking to adjust the program to make sure it adds value to MBA's but they are also doing a lot of training internally as well. Want to make sure they can really challenge an MBA.
- Intel: Joe – can't speak to hard skills – there is a culture/personality difference. Culturally – can see the personality difference, ex. Chicago, U of M, Fisher – the Chicago students didn't stay around very long, U of M would stay longer – Fisher somewhere in between.
- Google: Alex – there is no brand for Fisher MBA's – which is good. A lot of MBA brands are stereotypical and negative. A Candidate from a big 10 program from the Midwest should be leaning into the culture of our program – like the positive Midwest values, characteristics and traits.
- McKinsey: Chris – one thing that stands out – is demonstrating a sense of cohesion of the content of what they are learning into the interview. Where they use all of what they are learning and applying all the business skills – how they put it all together in a consulting project, etc.. Taking the focus of showing how they have applied all of their new knowledge and skills
- Curia: Eric – if you come into the program without the right experience first you don't get as much out of it. Sometimes we see certain schools their candidates have more pre-MBA experience. Making sure Fisher students have enough up-front experience and even relevant for the industry they want to go into
- Google: Alex – interviews can be and often are 75% about previous work experience than about the MBA
- Nestle: Tom – you get so much more out of the conversation when you have pre-MBA experience
- RG Barry: Tim – also didn't have much pre-MBA experience going in. It was a lot harder and had to find other types of experiences to make it work. You need to be able to talk business before coming into the MBA
- Capital One: Kush – also didn't have as much going into the program and wish he would have – but also important to have the mix of students in the classroom – some with and some without
- Intel: Joe – came straight out of undergrad – wish he would have had more experience, had a challenging time finding a job

Can you/do you hire international students? Why/why not?

- McKinsey: Chris – yes,
- Google: Alex – yes
- Vertiv: Betsy – no

- Nationwide: Matthew – no
- Capital One: Kush – no – because of corp. policy/hr policy
- Defense Logistics Agency: Natasha – no
- Intel: Joe – it's job scope dependent – softer skill jobs, marketing, etc. not open to international, if a more technical role – more justifiable if needed
- CoBank: Deepak – cost and time related

When you are hiring, are majors/specializations important or do you prefer a candidate with a general business (or other) MBA degree? Does having a major/specialization matter?

- Nestle: Tom – the more exposure to negotiations and getting used to hard conversations and working through those. Would love students to have even more skills in this as they move up in the organization.
- Capital One: Kush – a trend towards specialists than generalist; in tech there is a focus on having more doers than managers. If you are a manager, you need to be a damn good leader
- Vertiv: Betsy – lack of interview prep is something she is seeing – students not doing the company research – candidates need to show the effort of doing the research – seeing this across the board. Presentation skills candidates seem to be lacking this as well – being able to present, clear, concise communication – can visualize them presenting to a global leadership team
- Defense Logistics Agency: Natasha – Interviewing – the amount of time candidates spending on preparing for interviews is almost appalling. You can tell almost immediately they are not doing this work. We almost need to make this mandatory. Some people think they can just wing interviewing and they crash and burn and it looks bad on Fisher.
- ABB: Nicole – they spend too much time on case interviewing and not enough on behavioral

If you were to give advice to a student who was starting an MBA program regarding what they should do to enhance their marketability, what advice would you give them and why?

- ABB: Nicole - The technical skills they held prior to the MBA – should continue to hone these skills especially if they are continuing into a technical or manufacturing background
- CoBank: Deepak – enjoy the process of learning – focus on the learning not just in class but through out of class
- Capital One: Kush - International students – prepare to answer the question – ‘why should I hire you’ given all the obstacles the company has to go through to hire them
- Intel: Joe – the MBA program gave him a lot of exposure to a lot of higher level leaders – observe them – how they act, present themselves, etc.... be a sponge – understand what they are doing that has gotten them to where they are today.
- Defense Logistics Agency: Natasha – need to have a brand and being doing things to strengthen that brand – knowing that what they are doing outside of the interview to sabotage their brand.

Appendix A5: Main Ideas from Alumni Focus Group (2015-2022) and Current Student Meetings

Here are the high level summaries from the alumni focus group meetings as well as the student meetings. I divided the discussions into three parts – discussion on classes/course work, experiential learning and outside classroom engagements, and career opportunities management. The points below are identified as important elements by the groups.

Course Work and Other In class room engagement

- Core classes are extremely useful – helped students with minimal business background. One feedback is to improve integration days. Currently being viewed as additional class times. Integration can be done better
- Data – coding is essential. More important is how to say a story with the data. Visualization is critical these days
- Navigating risks and professional development (Alumni – reflecting on what were elements missing)
- Executive presentation and presence are needed to succeed in the current markets
- A class on design thinking may be useful (Alumni – reflecting back)
- How to articulate and communicate ideas succinctly is very useful for the business world. Managers are looking for this specific skill
- More classes that are cutting across silos are needed to operate in the business world. One of the alumni got a lot out of a design class offered by arts and sciences and another one took a CSE class. Healthcare classes with public health was a good experience
- Support structure for faculty teaching in the Core.
- Electives are not often available – evening electives are forced on the students
- Core Teams have been an issue this year (current students). Lots of participants not doing the work
- Some of students think that MBA education is easy while others are dedicated to get things out of the program. These varying expectations results in variation in team work.

Networking and Outside Class Activities

- Important lessons were learned through student teams/outside the class experiences
- Recent grad – too many project related courses. Some high stake project classes came upfront compared to other lower stake projects (recommend sequencing differently)
- Simulations/ Case Competitions and experiential learning were very useful as they reflect back on their program days
- No/Limited networking was available outside classroom with alumni (COVID-19 didn't help at all)
- More efforts to bridge across our alumni. They are all over the US yet we don't reach out to them
- Alumni disappointed with lack of connection. Need to start from ground zero
- Immersing our students into various companies/ or through treks can be useful.

- Teams are not always effective during projects that require more work. Lots of free riders in the teams. Several current students decided to forego GAP given the need to pull others.
- Engagement outside class is very low. Student groups tried doing several activities with minimal attendance.

Career Management

- Lots of variation in career advising. Response especially was very different between different advisers. Some had great experience and others did not.
- Several additional constraints for international students. Need some diversity in advisers who are from international backgrounds and understand the differences. How to strategically manage OPT/CPT conversations. Need for more companies to sponsor our students.
- Starting early is very important in terms of job and internship search. May even think about starting this journey before entering Fisher (Other schools are doing this). Can we leverage on resources such as centers to make connections?
- Number of companies recruiting international students are low.
- Good to have advisory board of companies that can interact with our students as early as during the orientation and throughout the program. Helps in commitment.
- Rebranding OCM to win several of our international alumni. They want to help but they don't see a reason right now (from three different international alumni).